



# The role of language in the recovery of mental disorders

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**Abstract.** This article examines the important role of language in recovering mental disorders. Mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, or eating disorders, often affect people's communication and interaction with the world around them. In this context, language significantly impacts the experiences of individuals with mental disorders. In addition, language also has a role in reducing the stigma against mental disorders. Using appropriate and non-discriminatory language can help change negative perceptions and stereotypes often associated with mental disorders. In a supportive society, inclusive and sensitive language can open doors for more open dialogue and a better understanding of mental health issues. In this article, we will discuss more about the role of language in mental illness recovery. We will highlight the importance of using appropriate language in a therapeutic context, addressing stigma, and promoting better overall mental health. By understanding and appreciating the role of language in this context, it is hoped that we can strengthen efforts to develop and recover from mental disorders holistically.

**Keywords:** Language, Recovery and Mental Disorders

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Mental disorders are serious challenges that affect the overall well-being of individuals. Depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or eating disorders can significantly impact a person's daily life and social interactions. Mental health recovery and re-development are important for individuals who experience these disorders [1].

Psychotherapy represents an evolving and critical approach to mental health treatment that acknowledges and incorporates the diverse backgrounds and contexts of individuals seeking psychological support. Traditional psychotherapy models have often been based on Western cultural norms, which may not always resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds. As a result, diverse populations have sometimes faced barriers to accessing mental health services and have experienced disparities in treatment outcomes [2].

The concept of recovery in the context of mental disorders has undergone a transformative shift in recent years, moving beyond mere symptom management to encompass a comprehensive and holistic approach to mental health care. Historically, mental health treatment primarily focused on the reduction of symptoms and the

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restoration of functioning. However, this traditional perspective often neglects the individual's experience and agency in their journey towards well-being [3]. The recovery model challenges this conventional approach by placing the person with a mental disorder at the center of their treatment and emphasizing their strengths, resilience, and personal goals. Recovery is not viewed as a one-size-fits-all process but as a unique and individualized journey involving growth, empowerment, and personal potential [4].

Focusing on hope, collaboration, and self-determination characterizes the recovery approach to mental disorders. It recognizes the importance of a supportive and non-judgmental environment that encourages individuals to participate actively in their treatment planning and decision-making. By empowering individuals to take ownership of their recovery process, the model fosters a sense of agency, autonomy, and control over one's life and well-being [5].

In this context, the role of language in the recovery of mental disorders is increasingly recognized and understood. Language is the main communication tool to express and understand individual inner experiences. In therapy, language is also an important tool in building an effective therapeutic relationship between client and therapist.

This background shows the importance of Research investigating the role of language in the recovery of mental disorders. Previous studies have shown that appropriate and supportive language can help individuals express emotions, articulate thoughts, and explore their experiences. In addition, language also plays a role in helping to reduce the stigma associated with mental disorders and promotes better social support.

However, despite awareness of the role of language in mental illness recovery, there is still a need to better understand the mechanisms underlying the relationship between language and mental health. Further Research is needed to investigate how appropriate and effective use of language can influence individual recovery processes, increase social support, and reduce the stigma associated with mental disorders.

There are several previous studies related to this article Studies related to the role of language in the recovery of mental disorders, including the Research: "The Role of Language in the Recovery Process: The Case of Eating Disorders" [6]. This Research explores the role of language in the recovery process of individuals with eating disorders. The results suggest that language that promotes self-reflection, empathy, and understanding of individual eating experiences is associated with progress in eating disorder recovery. Research: "Language Use and Recovery Among Individuals with Depression" [7]. This study explores the relationship between language use and individual recovery from depression. The research findings suggest that using more positive, proactive, and reflective language is associated with improved depressive symptoms and positive recovery experiences. "The Impact of Language in Shaping Recovery: A Qualitative Study with Individuals in Recovery from Mental Health Problems [8]. This Research uses a qualitative approach to explore the influence of language in shaping the recovery process of individuals with mental health problems.

The results show that language that respects, reinforces positive identity, and describes recovery hopes and goals is important in the recovery process.

The psychological meaning of words is a fascinating area of Research that explores the intricate relationship between language and the human mind. Language is a powerful communication tool, allowing individuals to convey thoughts, emotions, and experiences to others. However, beyond its apparent communicative function, language is imbued with profound psychological implications that influence cognition, perception, and behavior [9].

What distinguishes the article "The Role of Language in the Recovery of Mental Disorders" from previous studies lies in synthesizing relevant previous studies and emphasizing the role of language in recovering from mental disorders. While some previous research has explored the relationship between language and recovery, this article brings a new perspective by combining these findings and highlighting the importance of language in holistic recovery from mental disorders.

In this article, we will explore the role of language in mental illness recovery in greater depth. We will highlight how the appropriate and effective use of language in the context of therapy and social interaction can influence an individual's recovery process. In addition, we will discuss the practical implications of this understanding in efforts to increase social support and care for individuals with mental disorders.

By understanding the role of language in mental illness recovery, it is hoped that we can develop strategies and interventions that are more effective in helping individuals overcome their mental health challenges and build more meaningful and psychologically healthy lives.

## **2 METHOD**

In this article, the researcher uses the Qualitative Research Method, which is a method that focuses on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study through the collection and analysis of non-numeric data. This study uses subjective and interpretive approaches to understand the context and complexity of the phenomena studied.

In this article, we conduct a comprehensive literature review on the role of language in mental illness recovery. We search research articles, books and other relevant resources from academic and professional databases. We used keywords such as "language and mental recovery", "language therapy", "communication in mental health", and "stigma of mental disorders" to search for the appropriate literature. We consider Research conducted in various contexts, including clinical settings, group therapy, and participatory action research.

### 3 FINDINGS

This article finds that language can be a therapeutic cognitive behavioral and speech therapy. Appropriate use of language can assist individuals in articulating their experiences, identifying unhealthy thought patterns, and developing better coping strategies. Language can also influence individuals' perceptions of themselves and their world. Effective communication between the patient and the mental health service provider is critical to building a strong therapeutic relationship.

In addition, the stigma associated with mental disorders can affect recovery. The language used in society can strengthen stigma or reduce it. Therefore, pay attention to non-degrading or discriminatory language when discussing mental disorders.

### 4 DISCUSSION

Mental disorders are health problems that affect millions of people worldwide. Recovery from mental disorders involves various aspects, including medication, social support, and therapy. One aspect often overlooked in the recovery of mental disorders is the role of language. Language has a powerful impact on understanding, communicating, and healing individuals with mental disorders. This article will discuss the role of language in the recovery of mental disorders and the importance of paying attention to linguistic aspects in a therapeutic approach.

***Effective Communication in Therapy.*** Therapy is important in recovering mental disorders, and language plays a central role in therapeutic communication. Clear, structured, and empathetic language helps build a rapport between therapist and patient. The therapist's ability to use appropriate language and understand the meaning of the patient's expressions is a key factor in facilitating the recovery process.

Here are some examples of effective communication in therapy [10]; (1) Empathic listening: Effective therapists listen with empathy and actively listen to what the client is saying. They give their full attention, show interest and empathy, and demonstrate understanding of the client's feelings and experiences. Example: "I listened to what you said. I can feel how difficult this situation is for you.", (2) Ask relevant questions: Good therapists use relevant questions to understand the client's problems better and help the client explain thoughts or feelings that may be difficult to express. Example: "Can you tell me more about the feelings that come up when you face a situation like this?", (3) Conveying empathy and understanding: Effective therapists communicate their empathy and understanding towards clients. They use supportive language and facial expressions, showing they understand and appreciate the client's feelings. Example: "I can understand how difficult this situation is for you. It must be causing a lot of stress and anxiety.", (4) Avoiding judgment or criticism: Effective therapists avoid making judgments or criticizing clients. They create a safe and supportive environment where clients feel comfortable discussing their experiences or feelings without fear of judgment. Example: "I do not want to judge or condemn you. I am

here to listen and support you.", (5) Clarify and reformulate: Good therapists use clarifying and reformulating skills to ensure that they correctly understand what is being said by the client. It can help build a better understanding and ensure that communication goes smoothly. Example: "So, if I understand correctly, you feel trapped in a cycle of negative thoughts that you find difficult to stop. Is that correct?", (6) Using clear and understandable language: Effective therapists use clear, simple, and easy language for the client to understand. They avoid jargon or technicalities that may confuse the client. Example: "I want to explain this concept simply. So, these negative thoughts are habits of mind that have formed over time.", (7) Provide constructive feedback: Effective therapists give constructive feedback to clients. They praise or encourage when the client progresses and provide useful suggestions or pointers to help them overcome challenges. Example: "I appreciate your efforts to practice this relaxation technique. I see good progress in your ability to calm your mind."

***Language as a Tool of Self-Understanding.*** Mental disorders often affect individual self-understanding. Language can be important in understanding, describing, and reflecting on one's emotional and psychological experiences. Through language-based therapy, individuals can explore and articulate their thoughts and feelings, which can help build a better understanding of themselves and facilitate the healing process [11].

In the context of patients with mental illness, language can be an important tool for self-understanding and managing their experiences. Here are some examples of how language can be used as a tool for self-understanding, specifically in the treatment of patients with mental illness [12]; (1) Keeping a therapeutic journal: Mental illness patients can use therapeutic journals to express and record their daily thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Through writing, they can explore and reflect on any mood swings, symptoms, or emotional reactions they may be experiencing to identify certain patterns, triggers, or trends that can help them understand their condition better. Example: "I felt very anxious today and noticed that this symptom occurred after an intense social interaction. Writing in my journal helped me realize that anxiety arises when others notice or evaluate me.", (2) Talk therapy: In talk therapy or counseling, patients with mental illness can use language to talk about their experiences, negative thoughts, or difficult feelings. The therapist uses language to help them better understand what they are experiencing, identify unhealthy thought patterns, and develop effective strategies to cope with their symptoms or problems. Example: "I felt very trapped in negative thoughts and felt worthless. When I talk to my therapist, we try to reframe those thoughts and explore a deeper understanding of their origins and validity.", (3) Support groups: Participation in support groups can provide an opportunity for patients with mental illness to use language as a tool to share experiences with others who are going through similar things. In these groups, they can talk about daily challenges, gain new insights from others' perspectives, and get important emotional support. Through language, they can understand that they are not alone in their journey and can learn from the experiences of others. Example: "When I talk in a support group, I realize other people are going through the same thing. We can share useful strategies and support each other in dealing with our symptoms and struggles.", (4) Writing letters to yourself: Mental illness patients can

use language in the form of writing letters to themselves as a tool to understand and care for themselves. In these letters, they can express their hopes, goals or challenges they face. These letters can be a powerful reminder of their journey and achievements and a source of motivation in their recovery. Example: "Hello, future self; I know great challenges ahead of me. We have been through a lot of hard things before, and we are capable of overcoming this. Let us stick to our treatment plan and believe there is hope for the future.

Using language as a tool for self-understanding is essential in treating patients with mental illness. It helps patients explore a deeper understanding of their experiences and symptoms, identify unhealthy thought patterns, and develop effective strategies to manage their condition. In therapy, language also allows patients to communicate with therapists and others in a safe and supportive environment.

***Effects of Stigma and Language Stigmatization.*** Using stigmatizing or negative language toward individuals with mental disorders can worsen their condition. The stigma attached to language can lead to social isolation, shame, and inhibition in seeking help. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the use of impartial language and to promote awareness and support for individuals with mental disorders.

Here are some guidelines in communicating that avoid stigmatization [13]; (1) Use Neutral Language: Avoid using words that show stigma or negative stereotypes associated with mental illness. For example, do not use words like "crazy," "lunatic," or "madman.", (2) Do not Blame: Avoid blaming or ridiculing patients for their mental illness. Focus on support and understanding, (3) Use Medically Recognized Terms: Use medically recognized terms to describe mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, bipolar, or schizophrenia. It helps reduce stigma and ensures accurate language is used, (4) Listen with Empathy: Give your full attention when communicating with patients. Listen with empathy and do not dismiss their experiences, (5) Use Respectful Language: Use language that honors and respects the integrity and dignity of the patient. Keep an open attitude and value individual experiences, (6) Be Sensitive and Caring: Be mindful of the patient's feelings and sensitivity to certain languages and topics. Change the language or topic to suit their needs if they express discomfort.

***Language as a Means of Resilience and Recovery.*** Language can also be a means of resilience and recovery in the context of mental disorders [14]. Individuals can build positive and inspiring recovery narratives for themselves and others by choosing the right words. In group therapy, language can be used as a collaborative tool to support one another, share experiences, and reinforce individual strengths.

Several examples of language can be used to help people with mental illness recover. Here are some examples [15]; (1) Positive Statements: Use uplifting language and provide positive encouragement to the individual with mental illness. For example: "You have the strength to overcome this challenge.", "I believe in your ability to recover and thrive.", "Every day is a new opportunity to grow and recover.", (2) Empathic Language: Show empathy and understanding towards their experiences and

struggles. For example: "I can understand how difficult your situation is.", "You are not alone in this journey; I am here to support you.", "I appreciate your courage and perseverance in facing this challenge.", (3) Affirmation of Strengths: Focuses on the individual's strengths and abilities and reminds them of their potential. For example: "You have a very resilient and persevering nature.", "I see your progress, and I am proud of you.", "You have special skills to utilize in this recovery process.", (4) Low-Pressure Language: Use language that does not create pressure or reinforce guilt or shame. For example: "Do your best; every small step towards recovery is a success.", "Remember to give yourself time and space to rest and manage stress.", "Recovery is a process, so do not be too hard on yourself if there are setbacks."

## 5 CONCLUSION

This article underscores the importance of language in the recovery of mental disorders. Language can act as a powerful therapeutic tool, influencing individual perceptions and helping to overcome the stigma associated with mental disorders. Further Research is needed to understand better the specific mechanisms behind the role of language in recovery and to develop more effective approaches to language use in therapeutic contexts. By recognizing the importance of language, mental health practitioners can improve the quality of care they provide and support optimal recovery for individuals with mental disorders.

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